

**DRAFT MINUTES  
SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
BJ's Restaurant  
990 N. Center Street  
Gaylord, Michigan  
January 27, 2004**

**Chairman Bill Manson** called the meeting of the Snowmobile Advisory Committee (SAC) to order at 9:10 a.m. on Tuesday, January 27, 2004 in Gaylord, Michigan.

**Members Present:**

Bill Manson, Region III, Michigan Snowmobile Association, Grand Rapids  
Orville Olson, At-Large, Ludington  
Elza Inman, Grant Sponsor, Brethren  
James Duke, Region I, Michigan Snowmobile Association, Munising  
Bill Lucas, Region II, Michigan Snowmobile Association, Cadillac  
Lee Murray, At-Large, Hopkins  
Jack Nelson, Business Community, Greenville

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

Randy Charles, Forest Service, USDA, Ottawa National Forest

**Staff Present:**

James McMillan, Forest, Mineral and Fire Management (FMFM), Roscommon  
Kim Dufresne, FMFM, Plainwell  
Don Klingler, FMFM, Gaylord  
Steve Kubisiak, FMFM, Lansing  
James Radabaugh, State Trails Coordinator, Lansing  
Robin Pearson, FMFM, Gaylord  
Creig Grey, Law Enforcement, Lansing  
Richard Kennedy, FMFM, Lansing  
Joe Jarecki, FMFM, Pigeon River

**Chairman Manson** introduced and welcomed Jack Nelson as a new member of the Snowmobile Advisory Committee representing the business community. **Mr. Nelson** is owner of Nelson's Speed Shop in Greenville, Michigan.

The Snowmobile Advisory Committee Department Staff and audience introduced themselves.

**MINUTES**

Acknowledged minutes of the December 4, 2003, Snowmobile Advisory Committee Meeting. **Mr. Duke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Inman, to accept the minutes of the December 4, 2003 Snowmobile Advisory Committee meeting. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Gaylord to Cheboygan Work Group**

**Mr. Manson** reported the work group completed its initial report and presented it to Chief Koch. The work group will make a presentation to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) in

February. He said a re-route around Mullet Lake appears to be feasible and they are working on resolving issues relating to use of county roads, limited access highway rights-of-way and Pigeon River Country.

**Mr. Manson** read a letter of support from the Island Lakes Snowmobile Club and the Cheboygan Area Snowmobile Club. **Mr. Radabaugh** asked Mr. Manson to share the letter with the Gaylord to Cheboygan Work Group.

**Mr. Manson** will provide an update at the April 13, 2004, Snowmobile Advisory Committee meeting.

### **Finance Sub-Committee**

**Mr. Inman** reported the sub-committee completed its review of equipment reimbursement rates. They recommend the following top limit rates:

- Regular Tracked Vehicle      \$120,000.00
- Combined Unit                \$120,000.00
- Wheeled Tractor               \$100,000.00
- Drag                                \$12,000.00
- Brush Cutter in-lue of Drag   \$12,000.00

**Mr. Lucas made a motion, seconded by Mr. Duke, to accept the recommended top limit equipment reimbursement rates, to take immediate effect. Motion for adoption unanimously carried.**

**Mr. Radabaugh** asked for clarification of what the Snowmobile Advisory Committee intended “immediate effect” to mean; the current equipment grant cycle? **Mr. Manson** responded that it meant the next equipment grant cycle. **Mr. Radabaugh** said he would review the agreement on proposed equipment reimbursements with Forest, Mineral and Fire Management, and Grants, Contracts and Customer Systems.

### **Long Range Planning Sub-Committee**

**Mr. Olson** reported the Long Range Planning Sub-Committee is exploring ways to mark trails for emergency evacuation. He believes this is an important issue and noted that there is not currently a statewide standard. He is supportive of developing a standardized system and believes that once one is developed it should be included in the Snowmobile Trail Signing Standards. Discussion ensued. **Mr. Olson** said the sub-committee is seeking input from snowmobile clubs and will be meeting with various sponsors and emergency response agencies throughout the state. He said his goal is to have a system in place within the next two years.

**Mr. Olson** noted the need for improved communication between sponsors and field management. He noted that sponsors frequently contact the SAC to resolve disputes. He wants a way to resolve impasses between sponsors and field management. He requested an organizational chart for each management unit that clarifies chain-of-command and a dispute resolution process. **Mr. Radabaugh** and **Mr. Olson** will work on a contact list.

**Snow Country Trails Conservancy** -- **Mr. Manson** reported on the history and rationale for the development of the Snow Country Trails Conservancy. He said the primary goal is to develop a system of permanent snowmobile trails through the purchase of permanent easements across private lands. The Snow Country Trails Conservancy was incorporated in 2003 as a non-profit 501 3(c) corporation to promote, improve and expand permanent snowmobile trails. **Mr.**

**Manson** said, based on a poll of Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA) membership, eight out of ten are supportive of a fee increase to support the establishment of permanent snowmobile trails. MSA will be working on legislation and will solicit private donations for the conservancy.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Forest, Mineral and Fire Management**

**Richard Kennedy, FMFM, Lansing** reported on the status of executed grants and said he is working with Grants, Contracts and Customer Systems reviewing the grants handbook and field procedures. He said he has been working on a number of grant amendments and noted sponsor complaints relating to signing and subjectivity of inspectors.

**Mr. Radabaugh, FMFM, Lansing** reported on the status of the Pere-Marquette Pavement Study and Snowmobile Economic Study.

**Robin Pearson, FMFM, Gaylord** reported on the status of various trail acquisitions, incident reports and trail proposals in the northeast Lower Michigan management district.

**Mr. Radabaugh** referred the Committee to the Recreation Specialist Reports in their packets. **Mr. Manson** believes the Recreation Specialists should attend all of the SAC meetings. **Mr. Radabaugh** suggested SAC members contact the Recreation Specialists or Mr. Kubisiak direct, to coordinate follow-up on any items contained in the staff reports that require further investigation or action.

**Mr. Radabaugh** highlighted the Recreation Specialist reports.

**Marquette County** -- Discussion ensued about new snowmobile trail crossing permit fees recently initiated in Marquette County. The SAC believes it is inappropriate for counties to charge for a snowmobile trail crossing. It was the consensus of the SAC that the snowmobile program should not pay for road crossing permits. **Mr. Manson** will follow-up with Marquette County.

**Fur-Farm Snowmobile Trail** -- Discussion ensued about Fur-Farm Snowmobile Trail, and the possibility of identifying a sponsor to take over the grooming. **Mr. Manson** will follow-up with potential sponsors.

**Kim Dufresne, FMFM, Plainwell** reported on snowmobile activities in the southern Lower Michigan management district. He noted issues relating to snowmobile trail closures in Middleville and noted Parks and Recreation Bureau is developing local trail management agreements that will have snowmobile program implications.

### **Law Enforcement**

**Lt. Creig Grey, Lansing** explained Law Enforcement Division's (LED) administrative structure and said Captain Curtis Bacon will continue as LED's ex-officio member to the SAC. He highlighted the accident reporting process, the local law enforcement training that took place this winter, and made a power point presentation summarizing the snowmobile fatality statistics for the 2002-2003 snowmobile season. Discussion ensued. **Lt. Grey** invited SAC members to contact him if they have suggestions to improve the accident report. He added that 2004

accident statistics are updated daily and posted on the DNR website at [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr) under *Recreation and Camping/snowmobiling*. **Mr. Manson** thanked **Lt. Grey**.

### **USDA Forest Service**

**Randy Charles, USDA, Ottawa National Forest** reported the Huron-Manistee National Forest, Baldwin-White Cloud Ranger District, has begun initial scoping on a trail proposal submitted by the Lake Shore Snowmobile Club. He spoke in support of agency contact lists for sponsors and the need for improved trail marking for emergency purposes. He believes many sponsor concerns could be addressed at the local level and do not need to be taken to the SAC. He reported representatives from the Huron-Manistee National Forest will attend future SAC meetings.

### **PUBLIC APPEARANCE**

**Bud Longroy, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club** requested Mr. Olson include the Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club in future long range planning meetings. He inquired on the status of a grant amendment. **Mr. Kennedy** will follow-up and advise Mr. Longroy.

**Tom Gallagher, St. Helen Snowpackers** suggested old snowmobile signs be recycled and expressed concerns about sign vandalism.

**Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones** noted that Otsego County requires road crossing permits. He believes there is animosity between the local Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), in reference to funds trickling down to support the snowmobile program through gas taxes. **Mr. Taylor** commended Larry Green and Paige Perry, FMFM, Atlanta, for their assistance with the snowmobile program and encouraged the DNR to attend the Groomer's Workshop. The Lewiston Fun Ones offered to fund Larry's expenses to attend the Groomer's Workshop in March.

**Don Carroll, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club** expressed concerns with trail signing standards and subjectivity of inspectors.

**Martin Cottle, Sault Ste. Marie Snowmobile Association** believes the DNR field contacts need to enforce the new sign standards. He said that the State Police, in his county, are not doing any snowmobile enforcement this year due to budget cuts. He suggested that safety training manuals for snowmobile and off-road vehicles include signs. He noted a need for an "end trail" sign.

**Sil Mazzella, Alpine Snowmobile Club** said his organization uses front and rear drags on their groomer and asked how this will be addressed in the new reimbursement rates. He noted sign defects including warping and sheeting separation. Samples of defective signs will be provided to Mr. Moore.

**Tom Kozlowski, Rosco Higgins Trail Cruisers** requested the Recreation Specialist Reports be attached to the meeting minutes. He requested clarification on event policy and when an event permit is required. **Mr. McMillan, FMFM, Field Coordinator, Roscommon**, clarified that if an event is not advertised and no fee is collected, an event permit is not required.

**Marino Bernardi, Kalkaska**, does not believe the Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA) represents the average snowmobiler, and is critical of the DNR's management of the snowmobile program. He took a poll of the SAC and stated he rides over 5,000 miles a year on

his snowmobile. He asked for status on Deward Tract. He wants the DNR to contact all Snowmobilers.

**Ron Palmer, Pere Marquette Snowmobile Club** commended Robin Pearson on all the help she has provided to their organization.

**Robert Holland, EUPSC, Les Cheneaux Snowmobile Club** noted a newspaper article reporting the City of Mackinac Island located in Mackinac County received a snowmobile for law enforcement on Mackinac Island. He questioned the appropriateness of this arrangement. **Mr. Manson** said the purpose of the local snowmobile enforcement grants is to provide assistance to counties and municipalities that have snowmobile trails. Discussion ensued. **Lieutenant Grey** will follow-up with Grants, Contracts and Customer Systems.

**Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones** spoke in support of the snowmobile enforcement arrangement between the County of Mackinac and the City of Mackinac Island. Mackinac Island has unique law enforcement needs with regard to geographic logistics.

### **NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, April 13, 2004, 9:00 a.m., BJ's Restaurant & Catering, 990 North Center Street, Gaylord, Michigan.

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

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### **Public Present:**

Don Carroll, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Dick Ranney, ORV Trails Advisory Board  
Marino Bernardi, Kalkaska, Michigan  
Tom Gallagher, St. Helen Snowpackers  
Bud Longroy, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Bob Humpeat, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Bud Martin, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Dennis Manner, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Wallace Daniels, Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club  
Ilene Geiss-Wilson, Grayling Visitor Bureau  
Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones  
Rodney Maltman, PI Sno Trail, Rogers City  
John Houk, Northeast MI Snowmobile Council  
Tom Kozlowski, Rosco Higgins Trail Cruisers  
Herman Bratfish, Rosco Higgins Trail Cruisers

William R. Caskey, Jordan Valley Trail Council  
Jim Kostin, Jordan Valley Trail Council, Antrim Co. Snowmobile Club  
Errol Lee, Boyne Falls, ORV Trails Advisory Board  
Sil Mazzella, Alpine Snowmobile Club  
Dave Young, Pere Marquette Snowmobile Club  
Ron Palmer, Pere Marquette Snowmobile Club  
Jim Barber, Jordan Valley Trails Council  
Bob Kaley, Jordan Valley Trails Council  
Allen Cottle, Sault Ste. Marie Snowmobile Association  
Martin Cottle, Sault Ste. Marie Snowmobile Association  
Dobby Holland, EUPSC, Les Cheneaux Snowmobile Club  
Matthew Wier-Dieterman, Cadillac Winter Promotions

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